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ANNEX A
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UNITED STATES EXPERTS
TO THE
TECHNICAL DISCUSSIONS ON THE PROBLEM OF SURPRISE ATTACK
Geneva, Switzerland - November 10, 1958

December 15, 1958

MEMORANDUM FOR: Dr. Jerome Wiesner

SUBJECT: Missile Working Group Comments on
Surprise Attack Exercise

Provided herein are the general comments of the U. S. Missile Working Group concerning the problems encountered and suggested courses of future action prior to reinstituting Surprise Attack Discussions. This memorandum is divided into two parts: Part I treats the substantive problems; and Part II reviews administrative difficulties.

PART I - Substantive Comments

1. A timely communication system is the essential ingredient to an effective ballistic missile warning system. The feasibility, reliability and overall effectiveness of a suitable communication system have been a continuing point of controversy throughout this exercise. In order to support a statement that "It is technically feasible to provide ballistic missile early warning", an extensive and practical application of the various communication techniques must be engaged prior to future surprise attack discussions.

2. Although the technical characteristics of aerial search and verification techniques were readily available, there was considerable question concerning the degree of reliance that could be placed in such systems for various types of ballistic missile launching sites. It is recommended that actual aerial search and verification techniques be exercised against missile and other ground facilities in order to determine their validity in an overall inspection system.

3. Intelligence on Soviet ballistic missile deployment concepts was inadequate to reconcile the mobile vs. fixed site problem; therefore causing considerable difficulty in devising a suitable inspection system sufficiently comprehensive to

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cover both type facilities. Every effort should be made to obtain a more definitive answer on this problem.

4. Although discussion of limitations and disarmament was precluded from the present exercise, these problems as associated with the missile inspection system, should be studied in considerable detail prior to a future meeting. Specifically, should an adequate communication system not be feasible for a ballistic missile inspection system, the consideration of limitations and associated disarmament may be the only answer. Also closely related therewith is the possibility of applying certain inhibitors to ballistic missile launch site activities which could be monitored by resident observers and which would reduce the danger of surprise attack.

5. The effect of other national problems on the ballistic missile problem has not been adequately considered. For example, the degree to which U. S. national security would be effected by implementation of a ballistic missile inspection system in toto or in part; the effect of a nuclear ban on the ballistic missile problem; and the effect of implementing certain proposed zones of inspection. Political acceptability of many of these proposals, as well as the economic impact, also have not been sufficiently studied.

PART II: General and Administrative Problems

The comments in this section are intended to provide constructive criticism of value to future exercises of this nature. For convenience, the comments are divided between Washington and Geneva:

A. Washington

1. A great deal of "passing" interest in the missile subject was apparent and resulted in an excess of general "systems talk" not directly related to the problem.

2. The basic technical missile work was performed essentially by [REDACTED] with technical advice and assistance from several other members of the group. An additional technical missile man would have been a valuable adjunct in meeting the tight time schedules; however, the small size of the missile group tended to reduce extraneous discussions and permitted meeting prescribed deadlines.

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3. A lack of a clear-cut organizational chart indicating vertical as well as horizontal responsibilities reduced the effectiveness of operations. Informal liaison on a self-initiated basis greatly overcame this deficiency, but complete interchange of ideas on associated problems was not achieved.

4. Lack of adequate security clearances on the part of many individuals indirectly associated with the basic missile problem tended to create a lack of confidence and hampered a complete discussion of some key points.

B. Geneva

5. The first Five Power Missile Group meeting did not occur until 25 November. Although our Allies may have felt they did not have the opportunity to participate as extensively as desired in the missile exercise, the tight time schedules for completing the missile paper kept nationalistic quibbling to a minimum. None of the other Western Power members of the Missile Group had had any direct missile experience; however, they evidenced good judgment and worked constructively toward meeting assigned deadlines. The Five Power Missile Group worked effectively and congenially.

6. The security barriers between the U. S. Group and our Allies, and particularly the French and Italians, proved somewhat awkward inasmuch as they recognized we were not being completely candid about the U. S. missile program and about our knowledge of the Soviet missile program. The problem was dodged, apparently successfully, by utilizing Aviation Week as a source for many relevant technical details. The experience gained by dealing with our Western Allies was valuable as a prelude to determining what could be included in our table paper as well as subsequent discussions with the Eastern Powers should same ever occur.

7. Technical facilities in Geneva are somewhat limited. Should we have engaged in actual working sessions with the Soviets, a good hand computer, graph paper, logarithm tables and technical reference books would probably have been required.

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